



MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

COMMISSION ON VETERANS AFFAIRS

★ ★ ★ **ANNUAL REPORT 2010** ★ ★ ★

"Veterans Helping Veterans"

Letter of Transmittal:

November 1, 2010

The Honorable Isiah Leggett, Montgomery County Executive
The Honorable Nancy Floreen, President, Montgomery County Council
Uma S. Ahluwalia, Director, Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services

The Commission on Veterans Affairs is pleased to present a summary of its activities for the past year. We continue to advise and consult with you on issues of concern to the estimated over 60,000 veterans, and their families, who live in Montgomery County. Under your leadership and with your support, the Commission is mandated to research, assemble, analyze and disseminate information that will assist in meeting the needs of veterans and their families. The Commissioners bring knowledge and expertise to the County by providing valuable input and advice on issues affecting our veterans.

We have focused on identifying veterans and their family members, on recognition of active military and veterans and particularly those who have made the ultimate sacrifice for our great nation. We thank you for your leadership in renaming the Rockville Library and were honored to participate in the Renaming Ceremony to the Rockville Memorial Library on May 28, 2010 in memory of county soldiers who have died in military conflicts through the ages. We are working to end homelessness amongst veterans and thank you and Congressman Chris Van Hollen for your efforts to obtain, for the first time, 25 Veteran Affairs Supportive Housing vouchers. Your support of the new hiring preference for disabled veterans and veterans brings hope and promise for employment opportunities for veterans. We are also gratified that you signed Executive Order 227-10 which will allow the Commission to solicit gifts and /or donations for the purpose of recognizing veterans in public displays/exhibits in County buildings.

In order to provide greater health care access to veterans, we hope to have your support in working to establish a Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) in the County operated by the Veterans Administration (VA). We are currently exploring the establishment of a Veterans Court replicated after the Veterans Treatment Court program in Buffalo NY which was designed to keep non-violent offenders out of jail. We recently learned from the VA that nationwide 9% of all incarcerated inmates are veterans.

We wish to recognize and give our personal thanks to all Commissioners, the many community members, and the agency staff who participate in our meetings for their commitment and dedication. We would like to acknowledge DHHS Director Uma Ahluwalia for her role in meeting with the Boards, Commissions and Committees to keep us informed of important health and human services issues; Betsy Luecking, Staff Liaison, and Carly Clem, OSC, for their outstanding support in providing the Commission with the resources needed to carry out our mission. This report is the result of our combined efforts.

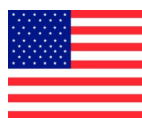
It has been a pleasure to work with you and members of the Commission during our term of service. We are confident that you will continue to support the Commission's efforts to enhance the lives of our veterans. Our meetings are open to the public, and we invite you to join us for any meeting.

Sincerely,



Bill Gray

Bill Gray
Chair



Jerry Godwin

Jerry Godwin
Vice-Chair



VETERANS REPRESENTATIVES

Carl Bedell, American Legion / Military Officers Association of America
Pete Esker, American Legion
Rich Fales, Veterans of Foreign Wars
Bill Gray, Vietnam Veterans of America
J. Mauri Hamilton, PhD, Disabled American Veterans
Roland R. Kauffman, Vietnam Veterans of America
Norman Locksley, American Legion
Elizabeth (Jane) McCarthy, American Legion

GENERAL PUBLIC MEMBERS

Sharon Hodge
Susan W. Kirk
Lorrie Knight-Major
Jacqueline Hunt Ogg

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

Jerry S. Godwin, Dept. of Economic Development
Richard M. Schiffauer, Dept. of HHS
Michael L. Subin, Office of the County Executive

NON-VOTING CONGRESSIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

Ann Humphrey, Office of Rep. Chris Van Hollen

STAFF

Betsy Luecking, *Staff Liaison*
Carly Clem, *Office Services Coordinator*

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CONNECT WITH THE COMMISSION



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www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cva



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Visit our website to **sign up for eSubscribe** to receive emails about Veterans information and resources. <https://ext01.montgomerycountymd.gov/entp/s1p/esubpublic/newssubscriber.do>



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<https://alert.montgomerycountymd.gov>

COMMISSION PRESENTATIONS FOR 2009 - 2010

November 2009:	What We Have Learned From Veterans Muster, Veterans Day, County Executive Reception and Progress to Date - What Do You/We Hope to Accomplish in the Upcoming Year? ~ <i>Discussion led by Bill Gray, Chair</i>
December 2009:	Working Together To Meet The Needs of Maryland's Veterans ~ <i>Ed Chow, Secretary, Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs</i> Congressional Representative Update ~ <i>Ann Humphrey, Office of Representative Chris Van Hollen</i>
January 2010:	"Community Heroes" ~ <i>Marian Merewitz, Montgomery Community Television (MCT)</i> Maryland National Guard Forums on Veteran Reintegration ~ <i>Jerry Godwin, Vice-Chair</i>
February 2010:	Planning for Montgomery County Public Libraries Veteran Recognition for Month of May (Memorial Day) and Month of November (Veterans Day) ~ <i>Parker Hamilton, Director, Montgomery County Public Libraries</i>
March 2010:	Veterans Recognition and Memorial Day Planning ~ <i>Chuck Short, Special Assistant to the County Executive, and Mike Subin, Commissioner</i> Corrections and Re-entry Back Into the Community ~ <i>Gale Starkey, Re-entry Unit Manager, and Joyce Reimherr, Employment Specialist, One-Stop Employment Center, Montgomery County Correctional Facility (MCCF); Bob Pelletier, Veterans Services, and Fred Chandler, Re-entry Employment Specialist, MontgomeryWorks</i>
April 2010:	Update on Wheaton Veterans Park ~ <i>Gary Stith, Deputy Director, Planning and Development, Montgomery County Department of General Services</i> Follow-Up: December, 2009 Meeting ~ <i>Ed Chow, Secretary, Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs</i>
May 2010:	Issue of Veterans with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and Traumatic Brain Injury ~ <i>Dr. Lolita T. O'Donnell, PhD, RN, Deputy Director, Clearinghouse, Outreach & Advocacy Directorate Defense Centers of Excellence (DCoE) for Psychological Health (PH) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)</i> Silver Spring Civic Building and Veterans Plaza ~ <i>Reemberto Rodriguez, Director, Silver Spring Regional Services Center</i>
June 2010:	Developing a Strategy to Have a Community-Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) Located in Montgomery County ~ <i>The Honorable Duchy Trachtenberg, Councilmember, Montgomery County Council</i>
September 2010:	Plans for Veterans Day Program and Celebration, Thursday, November 11, 2010 - Silver Spring Civic Center at Veterans Plaza ~ <i>Bill Gray, Chair</i> Discussion on Spectrum of Services in the Department of Corrections Re-Entry Program/Update on Executive Regulation to allow for Donations to Commission ~ <i>Mike Subin, Commissioner</i>
October 2010:	Discussion on Veterans Legal Issues and the Court System ~ <i>Dr. Maria D Llorente, Associate Chief of Staff for Mental Health, VA Hospital; Karen Carrington, Justice Outreach Social Worker, VA Hospital</i>

ABOUT THE COMMISSION

HISTORY

The Commission on Veterans Affairs was established by County legislation in 2008 to advise the County Executive and County Council on the coordination and development of the County's policies affecting veterans and their families.

MISSION

The Commission's responsibilities are to research, assemble, analyze and disseminate information and educational materials relating to activities and programs that will assist in meeting the needs of veterans and their families; institute and conduct educational and other programs, meetings, and conferences to promote the rights and opportunities for veterans; advise the Executive and the Council on the status of programs and services in the State and County related to the needs of veterans and their families; and assist in planning appropriate public acknowledgement of the contributions made by veterans, and assist in planning.

MEMBERSHIP

The Commission on Veterans Affairs is composed of fifteen voting members and one non-voting who serve in a volunteer capacity. Members are appointed by the County Executive and confirmed by the County Council.

The Commission includes:

- ▶ 8 Veterans,
- ▶ 4 General Public, and
- ▶ 3 Ex-Officio Members
- ▶ 1 Non-Voting Congressional Representative

MEETINGS

All Commission and Committee meetings are open to the public. The Commission welcomes visitors to join us as we serve the County and its residents. Meetings are subject to change without advance notice. Please call to confirm day and time of meetings and to request any special accommodations. As possible, we adjust meeting dates in order to accommodate days of major religious observances. You can view the Commission meeting minutes online at:

www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cva

MEETING SCHEDULE FOR 2010 - 2011

Full Commission Meeting

3rd Tuesday of the month, September to June
Summer recess during July and August

401 Hungerford Drive, Rockville, MD 20850

1st Floor Tan Conference Room

6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

Workgroups meet, as needed, at differing locations.



RECOMMENDATIONS - TOP TWO POLICY ISSUES FY12

MONTGOMERY COUNTY COMMISSION ON VETERANS AFFAIRS
MEETING WITH THE HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE, COUNTY COUNCIL
Bill Gray, Chair - Jerry Godwin, Vice-Chair
September 23, 2010

Recommendations - Top Two Policy Issues FY12

1. The County needs to work to provide more support to veterans, including securing more state and federally funded services. We have one of the largest veteran populations in the State, but have very few services. Those in place are woefully inadequate. Specifically, we suggest that the Veterans Administration work to get the Silver Spring Vet Center back up to speed as quickly as possible and that the State provide a full-time Veterans Service Officer for Montgomery County to help our veterans and their survivors obtain the benefits to which they are entitled. Currently, the Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs provides a Veteran Services Officer on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of every month from 9:00 a.m. – 3 p.m. and it is co-located with the Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation in the Wheaton Shopping Center.

There are several mental health and physical health initiatives we are working on and hope to see begun in near future. These include:

- A Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) to provide health and mental health services to the county's veterans located within the County.
- Tele-mental health services provided by the Veterans Administration to be located at an HHS facility. We are already in talks with the VA about such a program.
- Increasing the number of housing vouchers for homeless veterans (VASH vouchers) going directly to Montgomery County, Congressman Van Hollen procured 25 vouchers for the County for the first time this year, and all were committed within a very short time.

We recommend that the County establish a Veterans Court, which is designed to keep veterans who are non-violent offenders out of jail. Veteran mentors are assigned to veterans convicted of crimes to assist them with applying for benefits and services, and assisting with issues such as homelessness, unemployment, and mental health concerns. We recommend that this Veterans Court program uses the VA or Naval Hospitals as treatment locations. We recommend that the County replicate the Veterans Treatment Court program in Buffalo NY. There are some who believe it should be through a mental health court but most Veterans will refuse to have anything to do with something called a mental health court as will most lawyers and judges. You can't convict someone FOR a mental health problem. The concept of a veterans court encompasses much more than mental health. Convicting someone in a mental health court could jeopardize future job prospects and possibly lead to discharge for veterans still in the service. What's normal in combat and what's normal elsewhere is not necessarily a mental health problem. Adjusting to a different culture can cause problems but they are not necessarily mental health problems.

2. The County should take steps to ensure that County Veterans apply for any needed benefits by ensuring full implementation of **all** County departments and contractors to identify those persons seeking services who are veterans by asking the following question:

Have you or an immediate family member including a deceased spouse ever served in the U. S. Armed Forces, National Guard or Reserve? __ Yes __ No

Then the County should provide training to staff as to who they should refer Veterans to help them apply for benefits.

FY11 OPERATING BUDGET TESTIMONY

COMMISSION ON VETERANS AFFAIRS

Testimony before the Montgomery County Council on the FY 11 Operating Budget
April 8, 2010

Bill Gray, Chair – Jerry Godwin, Vice-Chair

Good Evening, my name is Bill Gray and I am speaking on behalf of the Commission on Veterans Affairs. As the newest HHS Commission, we appreciate the opportunity to share with you some of our top priorities for the upcoming year. We recognize that the County is in a severe budget crisis but we ask that you provide or coordinate with the Veterans Health Administration for critically needed mental health services for persons with mental health and substance abuse problems. Before using County dollars, we recommend that you set in place practices to take advantage of any and all federally funded programs by the Department of Veterans Affairs or other federal programs.

Require departments to identify on the intake form if the individual or any immediate family member ever served in the U.S. Armed Forces, National Guard or Reserves, so that they all can be assessed for state and federal programs that they may be eligible for such as respite care for families with children who have developmental disabilities, or home care for veterans who are seniors. This includes and is not limited to HHS, police, and corrections.

The County HOC apply to receive Veterans Administration Supported Housing {VASH} vouchers directly from the VA. We understand that there was difficulty in accurately reflecting the total number of Veterans living in shelters and those who are living in the woods to support receiving these VASH vouchers.

Require all departments to apply for federal grants/seek out partnerships with the private and non-profit sector which would benefit Veterans, their spouses and children. Ideally, it will bring money and/or jobs to Montgomery County.

We recommend that the County work with the Veterans Health Administration to establish a Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) in the County to provide medical and psychiatric care for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, and Traumatic Brain Injury, the most prevalent mental/behavioral health disorders among service members returning from overseas deployment, in the community, not just at VA hospitals. This CBOC would also provide the same services and coordinate the care with the VA through screening. Hopefully, this CBOC would include a full time "Service Organization" benefits claims counselor.

We recommend that the County work to help establish a Veterans Court program in Montgomery County. This type of court rehabilitates veterans in place of incarceration and the County can look to Erie, New York for program guidelines.

We have worked with the Commission on People with Disabilities and supported a bill, now law, which establishes a hiring preference for veterans and persons with disabilities.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input. Please let us know how we can be of assistance.

COMMUNITY-BASED OUTREACH CLINIC SUPPORT LETTER

COMMISSION ON VETERANS AFFAIRS

February 5, 2010

Honorable Isiah Leggett
County Executive
101 Monroe Street
Rockville, MD

Dear Mr. Leggett,

On behalf of the Commission on Veterans Affairs, I am writing to request your support in working with us to establish a Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) operated by the Veterans Administration (VA). Approximately 20-40% of soldiers returning from combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan meet criteria for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) at the time of re-integration back into the community. As time goes on, the incidence of PTSD and other behavioral health issues in returning veterans increases. Studies have indicated the prevalence rate of behavioral health symptoms including PTSD and depression in returning veterans as high as 44%. Delays in, or lack of treatment can result in increased rates of unemployment, substance abuse, marital difficulties and suicides.

Veterans residing in rural areas and areas not accessible to Veterans medical facilities have difficulty finding behavioral health and other services. Veterans returning from war who may be employed and living with their families in the community of Montgomery County have limited access to local VA facilities. The only VA facility in Montgomery County is the Silver Spring Vet Center., but it does not provide medical or psychiatric care.

According to the 2009 Interim Report dated December 16, 2009 from the Maryland Veterans Behavioral Health Advisory Board, there is a plan to open new CBOC's on military bases such as Ft Meade, Ft. Dietrich and Andrews Air Force Base. In this report there is no apparent plan for a CBOC in Montgomery County which is one of the counties with the greatest number of veterans and only one facility providing limited counseling services to Veterans.

To better meet the needs of Montgomery County Veterans, it was agreed upon by the members of the Veterans Commission at our monthly meeting to recommend that:

1. These CBOCs be placed in the community and not on military installations to increase access especially to those Veterans that are not on active duty and are living and working in the civilian community.
2. A CBOC be placed specifically in a community located in Montgomery County where there is a significant number of Veterans returning from war with behavioral health needs.

We appreciate any support that you can provide to this effort. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Bill Gray



VETERANS ADMINISTRATION SUPPORTED HOUSING (VASH) REQUEST

COMMISSION ON VETERANS AFFAIRS

February 18, 2010

Honorable Isiah Leggett
County Executive
101 Monroe Street
Rockville, MD

Dear Mr. Leggett,

On behalf of the Commission on Veterans Affairs, I am writing to request your assistance to have the County request the Veterans Administration Supported Housing (VASH), the national program for providing Section 8 permanent housing assistance to veterans, to give the vouchers directly to the Montgomery County Housing Opportunities Commission rather than to the D.C. Housing Authority. This year there are 10,000 vouchers being distributed to VA hospitals across the country.

Last year there were also 10,000 vouchers distributed. The Washington D.C. VA medical center received 245 total vouchers last year. Of these 35 were sent directly to Fairfax County Housing HOC and 35 vouchers sent to the Prince Georges county housing HOC, the balance were sent to the DC Housing Authority. (County HOC 's administer HUD Section 8 housing programs.) Montgomery County qualifying veterans could receive a Section 8 VASH voucher but the administration of the voucher was handled by the DC Housing Authority which then "ported" the voucher to Montgomery Co HUD department.

The VA Medical Center locates and prepares the needed documentation for a homeless veteran to enter into the VASH program. They then notify the appropriate area HOC/Housing Authority which arranges an interview/intake with the veteran. When vouchers are handled through the Washington D.C. Housing Authority it takes on average 6-8 months for a veteran to be interviewed, get the needed paperwork from the DC Housing Authority, find a place, and land in it. For veterans working directly with Prince Georges' and Fairfax counties, it only takes 1-2 months. We have every reason to believe direct to Montgomery County vouchers could be handled as efficiently as those from Prince Georges' or Fairfax counties.

At any rate, the 10,000 vouchers for this year are being "divided up" probably by the end of March. If Montgomery County is going to get some directly, this request needs to be made right away. Most homeless veterans are staying in county provided shelters, rehab programs, transitional housing or local hotels in the case of homeless families. To get homeless veterans housed in 1-2 months versus 6-8 months will save the county a considerable sum and more importantly get the veteran into a much better permanent living situation.

We appreciate any support that you can provide to this effort. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Bill Gray, Chairman

FIRST TIME HOC RECEIVES HOUSING VOUCHERS FOR HOMELESS VETERANS

HELP IS ON THE WAY FOR HOMELESS VETERANS IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY MONTGOMERY COUNTY, HOC TO RECEIVE ADDITIONAL HOUSING VOUCHERS UNDER VETERANS AFFAIRS SUPPORTIVE HOUSING (VASH) PROGRAM

HOC Press Release June 28, 2010

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development recently announced the allocation of 25 new Housing Choice Vouchers to the Housing Opportunities Commission for homeless veterans in Montgomery County.

The new vouchers are part of the HUD-VASH (Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing) program. The program combines HUD Housing Choice Voucher rental assistance for homeless veterans with case management and clinical services provided by the Veterans Affairs at its medical centers and in the community.

The VA Medical Center in Washington, D.C. will provide names of homeless veterans in Montgomery County eligible for the vouchers. The Housing Opportunities Commission will oversee the administration of the vouchers. Veterans using the vouchers will pay a portion of their income (30 percent) toward rent; the Housing Opportunities Commission will pay the remainder of the rent due to the landlord.

Rep. Chris Van Hollen and the Montgomery County Commission on Veterans Affairs were instrumental in securing the additional VASH vouchers for Montgomery County.

"After answering the call to duty and serving their country on the battlefields of Afghanistan and Iraq, thousands of veterans walk the streets of this country without a place to lay their heads at night. Whatever the causes of their homelessness, these warriors deserve our respect and support. Providing housing vouchers is just one thing we can do to address the silent epidemic of homelessness affecting so many of our veterans," said Congressman Chris Van Hollen (D-MD).

"We as a community owe much to veterans for their service and sacrifice," said County Executive Isiah Leggett, a Vietnam veteran. "Providing additional housing vouchers is an important step to help those veterans in need find a safe and affordable place to live in Montgomery County."

"The Montgomery Commission on Veterans Affairs was pleased to initiate the request for these vouchers and to see that the federal government recognizes that there is hardship and financial need in the County for over 100 homeless veterans in dire need of housing subsidies and support services. For too long, this population has been ignored and not properly cared for in spite of their service to this country, particularly the Vietnam Veterans who returned without receiving appropriate mental health and substance abuse services," said Bill Gray, Chairman of the Montgomery County Commission on Veterans Affairs.

"Recent news stories about soldiers returning from war zones with disabilities that prevent them from resuming normal lives confirm what many people working in the social services and homeless services fields already know: namely that many veterans are part of the at-risk population in our community," said Annie Alston, Executive Director of the Housing Opportunities Commission.

"Veterans need all kinds of services to get them back on their feet and they especially need help paying for housing. I am delighted that we now have an additional 25 Housing Choice Vouchers to help Montgomery County veterans. Through the VASH program, these veterans will receive both housing help from HOC and supportive services through the Washington, D.C. VA Medical Center," Alston said.

The Veterans Administration estimates that 107,000 veterans in the United States are homeless on any given night. Over the course of a year, approximately twice that many experience homelessness. Only eight percent of the general population can claim veteran status, but nearly one-fifth of the homeless population are veterans.

BILL 46-09 HIRING PREFERENCE TESTIMONY

**Montgomery County Commission on Veterans Affairs
Testimony before the Montgomery County Council
Jerry Godwin, Vice-Chair - Supporting 46-09
January 12, 2010**

Good evening. My name is Jerry Godwin and I am the Vice-Chair of the Commission on Veterans Affairs and testifying on their behalf this evening. The Commission very much appreciates the work of the County to address the critical issue of unemployment of individuals with disabilities including the many disabled veterans who are not employed.

The Commission strongly supports the County's proposed hiring preference for individuals with targeted disabilities. In addition to those certified by DORS, this hiring preference would also apply to disabled war veterans who are certified by the Veterans Administration as having disability rating of 30% or more.

Here is some information for you to consider in support of this bill. In early 2008, The Community Foundation joined with Montgomery County Executive Isiah Leggett to commission a study to determine the feasibility of a community-based nonprofit response to complement government and national nonprofit efforts to ease the hardships of deployment to Afghanistan and Iraq and post-deployment reintegration for troops and families in the National Capital Region.

In their report published in October, 2008 they cited the following employment issues regarding veterans: Guard and reserve soldiers may find their former jobs no longer exist, or their employers have downsized, folded, merged or relocated.

It is "very common" for soldiers to file for bankruptcy following deployments and injuries. Some veterans have fallen into debt waiting for compensation from the VA for their disability claims.

Because of frustration with government agencies, 77% of veterans say they don't even bother to seek reemployment help.

18% of veterans recently back from deployments are unemployed. Of those who do work, 25% earn less than \$21,000.

An estimated 36,967 soldiers have "ever deployed" and an estimated 6,020 are "currently deployed" to Afghanistan and/or Iraq. Of these, 5,320 have "ever deployed" and 931 are "currently deployed" from Montgomery and Prince George's Counties. 3,101 have "ever deployed" and 509 are "currently deployed" from DC. 28,546 have "ever deployed" and 4,580 are "currently deployed" from Northern Virginia.

There are more than 700 soldiers and 1000 family members who are in the area at any one time by virtue of the specialized care provided by the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda and Walter Reed Army Medical Center on the border of DC and Silver Spring. The average length of stay for most of the wounded warriors at Walter Reed is more than 380 days.

The military reports that 208 soldiers from our region have died in the two wars and 1,218 have been wounded in action.

We thank you for your consideration of this important employment bill that could help to bring opportunity to veterans who have unselfishly served our country.

BILL 46-09 HIRING PREFERENCE SIGNED INTO LAW

Leggett Celebrates Signing of Disability and Veteran Hiring Bill Into Law; Establishes County as Local Leader

Montgomery County Press Release

February 28, 2010

Montgomery County Executive Isiah Leggett today celebrated the signing into law of Bill 46-09, which establishes a hiring preference for veterans and persons with disabilities for a vacant County merit system position if the candidate is among the highest rated candidates in a normal competitive process. (The bill signing was postponed due to last week's snowstorm. Bill 46-09 was signed by the County Executive and returned to the County Council earlier this week.)

The new law alters an existing hiring preference for veterans, giving the same advantage to people with disabilities. It also creates a new classification -- veterans with disabilities. "Giving preference to qualified persons with disabilities is simply the right thing to do," said Leggett. "Helping out veterans, who have returned home and are facing financial hardship and high unemployment rates, is something I believe we all want to do. These brave men and women have given so much to their country, and this is one way for us to give back to them and to provide hope and opportunity."

Bill 46-09 requires the County Executive to adopt regulations establishing and maintaining a hiring preference for certain qualified persons with disabilities who apply for an initial appointment to a County merit system position. The Council's Management and Fiscal Policy Committee recommended amending the bill to place a veteran with a disability first in the order of hiring preference and to give a veteran without a disability and a non-veteran with a disability an equal preference. The law relies on the definition of disabled used in federal hiring programs, not the broader definition used to prevent discrimination under the Americans With Disabilities Act. The applicant must have proof of the disability, certification of job readiness, and meet all required qualifications for the position.

"With this action, Montgomery County is opening wider the door to qualified applicants with disabilities," said Councilmember Phil Andrews (D Gaithersburg-Rockville), the measure's chief sponsor. "This law in combination with other initiatives to hire qualified persons with disabilities will, over time, reduce the very high unemployment rate of people with disabilities, and enrich the diversity of the County government workforce."

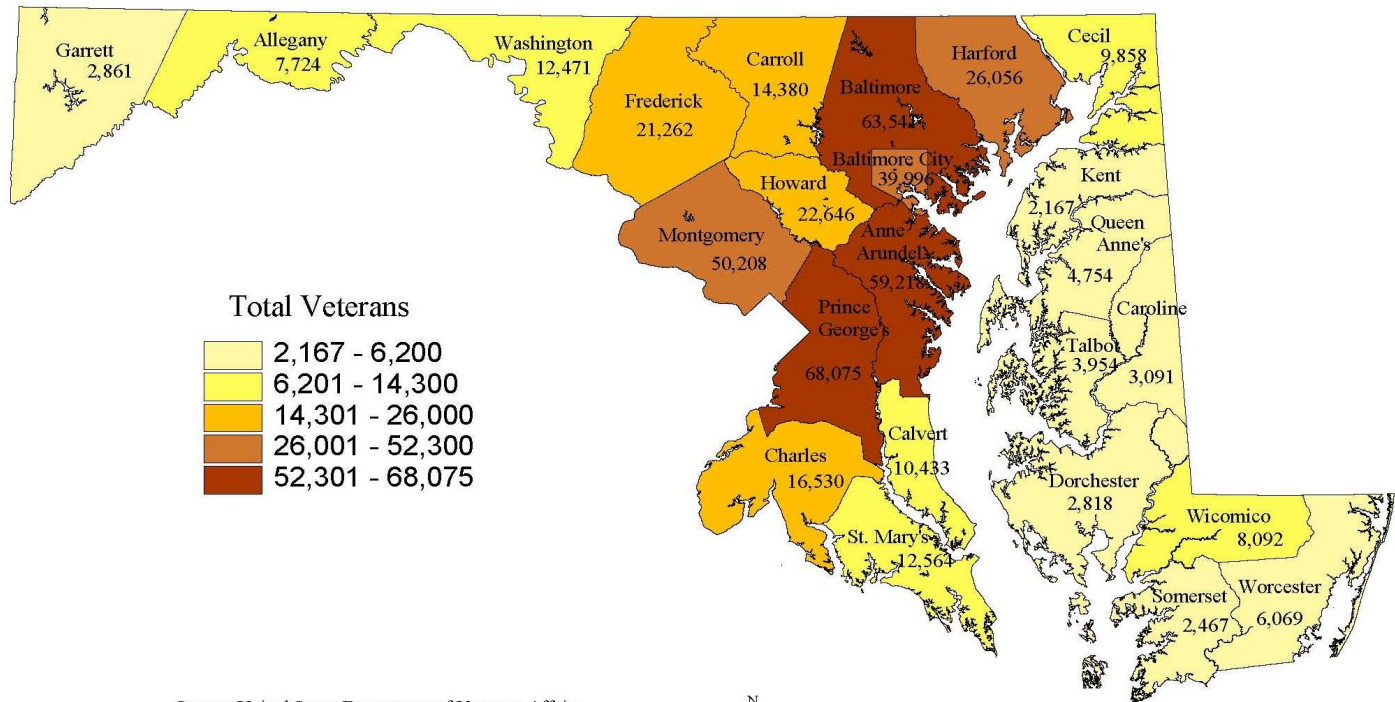
"This bill shows that the County appreciates the service veterans have given for our County and country, and the hardships they have endured," said Chairman of the Commission on Veterans Affairs Bill Gray. "It will help them tremendously and ideally to start a career working for the County."

"I applaud the County Executive and members of the County Council for their vision and commitment towards the hiring of individuals with disabilities in Montgomery County Government," said Chair of the Commission on People with Disabilities Mark Maxin. "This bill acknowledges the extraordinary service and sacrifice of our disabled veterans. Individuals with disabilities are a largely untapped pool of talent and ability who can perform a wide range of jobs. The myths, fears, bias and stereotypes associated with these individuals can be far more limiting than the medical condition itself."

PROJECTED NUMBER OF VETERANS IN MARYLAND & MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Projected Number of Veterans in Maryland - 2010

Projected Veterans in Maryland: 471,238



Source: United States Department of Veterans Affairs
Map Prepared for the Maryland Department of Veteran Affairs
by the Maryland Department of Planning, Planning Data Services



Veteran Population of Montgomery County, MD - 2009

Subject	Veterans	Total Population
Civilian Population 18 years and over	52,208 or 7.2%	727,823
Period of Service	Veterans	% of 52,208
Gulf War (9/2001 or later) veterans	8,980	17.2%
Gulf War (8/1990 to 8/2001) veterans	10,755	20.6%
Vietnam era veterans	15,766	30.2%
Korean War veterans	6,108	11.7%
World War II veterans	6,891	13.2%
Gender	Veterans	% of 52,208
Male	45,839	87.8%
Female	6,369	12.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2009

Extrapolated Projected Veteran Population of Montgomery County, MD - 2010

Subject	Veterans	Total Population
Civilian Population 18 years and over	69,955 or 7.2%	971,600

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

ROCKVILLE LIBRARY RENAMED TO ROCKVILLE MEMORIAL LIBRARY

Montgomery County Media Advisory

May 27, 2010

A formal ceremony marking the official renaming of the Rockville Library to the Rockville Memorial Library will be held on Friday, May 28 at 11 a.m. in the front of the building at 21 Maryland Ave., Rockville.

On November 10, 2009, Montgomery County Executive Ike Leggett signed a proclamation declaring that the name of the library be changed to honor “those who have given their lives defending the principles of freedom [during every military conflict since the County was created in 1776] and will be deserving of the highest gratitude and honor by the people of Montgomery County.”

“It is fitting that this magnificent library stand in name and purpose as a tribute to the memory of the brave women and men from Montgomery County who gave their lives so that we and future generations may enjoy the benefits of such a facility,” said Leggett who is a Vietnam veteran, having commanded U.S. and South Vietnamese troops in field combat during his tour of duty in 1968-69.

In addition to Leggett, other local elected officials are expected to attend. Montgomery County Public Libraries (MCPL) Director Parker Hamilton will serve as emcee for the program that will also include representatives of the Montgomery County Commission on Veterans Affairs, members of local families who have lost loved ones in the conflicts, and veterans representing the major wars in recent history.

Hamilton said that “With widespread support from our community, the Rockville Library was renamed the Rockville Memorial Library to honor, remember and reflect upon the sacrifices made by members of our community who gave their lives in service to our country. We are very proud of the connection made between the past and the present that allows us to honor and create a sense of history and community values.

Among those attending will be Richard and Lee Ann Doerflinger of Silver Spring, whose son, Army SPC Thomas K. Doerflinger, a 2002 graduate of Springbrook High School, was killed in action in Iraq on Veteran’s Day, 2004.

“Like many of the heroes being honored,” they said, “our son put himself in harm’s way in a part of the world where the freedom to think and believe, to read and write as we wish, are all but unknown. We hope those who use the library will be reminded that these freedoms we take for granted are bought at great price.”

The County’s Commission on Veterans Affairs, established in 2008 at Leggett’s request, will be represented by Chairman Bill Gray. “The Montgomery County public library system gives us the opportunity to freely borrow books and other materials and to do research,” Gray said. “Renaming the library Rockville Memorial Library will honor the individuals from Montgomery County who have given their lives to assure us that we will continue to receive these benefits.”

The new library identification sign, centered on the angled beam at the front of the glass canopy above the front entryway, will be unveiled as part of the ceremony.



County Executive Ike Leggett (second from right) joined approximately 100 persons in the Rockville Town Square Plaza at the beginning of the Memorial Day weekend for the official ceremony marking the renaming of the Rockville Library to the Rockville Memorial Library. Standing by one of the new signs are (from left): Gayle Selkin-Gutman and Jacques Gelin, Friends of the Library, Rockville Chapter; County Councilmembers Phil Andrews and Duchy Trachtenberg; former Rockville City Councilmember Anne Robbins; Irwin Cohen, community activist and advocate for renaming the library to honor local service people who lost their lives in the line of duty; Rockville Mayor Phyllis Marcuccio; Leggett; and Bill Gray, chairman of the Montgomery County Commission on Veterans Affairs.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY VETERANS COLLABORATIVE

The purpose of this group is to share information and resources, and to coordinate efforts to serve veterans in Montgomery County between County, State, and Federal efforts. It was established in September, 2008 and is coordinated by Rich Schiffauer, Commissioner and staff of the Department of Health and Human Services, Behavioral Health and Crisis Services.

Purpose: Coordinates Montgomery County's efforts to serve veterans with similar efforts undertaken by the State, and to ensure that services are not being duplicated.

- ▶ Original members were Montgomery County Health and Human Services/Behavioral Health & Crisis Services, Montgomery County Mental Health Association, and Maryland's Commitment to Veterans.
- ▶ Have continued to add partners as we have gone along.
- ▶ Meetings are used for information sharing and analysis of needs.
- ▶ Meetings are held every other month.

Over the course of the past year and a half we have added:

- Montgomery College Combat 2 College
- Montgomery County Police Crisis Intervention Team
- Montgomery County Department of Correction and Rehabilitation
- Montgomery County Commission on Veterans Affairs staff liaison
- Montgomery County Commission on Veterans Affairs Chair or designee
- Veterans Administration's Silver Spring Veterans Outreach Center
- Veteran's Administration's Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) 5
- Veterans Administration Homeless Outreach
- DOD/VA Federal Recovery Coordinator
- Military One Source
- Easter Seals Foundation
- Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury
- Secretary of Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs
- VA/DOD Federal Recovery Coordinator
- Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind
- Gold Star Mother
- Pro-Bono Counseling Project
- Yellow Ribbon Program
- Department of Labor – Veterans Employment Training
- Mental Hygiene Administration – Traumatic Brain Injury Coordinator
- Montgomery Works
- NVideoNow
- Maryland National Guard Transition Assistance Coordinator
- Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind
- Crossings Healings Works
- Baltimore County Homefront

MONTGOMERY COUNTY VETERANS COLLABORATIVE CONTINUED

Example of a project we worked on:

- ▶ We worked with the Maryland's Commitment to Veterans key stakeholders group comprised of members appointed by the Lt. Governor to assist the Maryland's Commitment to Veterans Project Coordinator to design a certification training program for behavioral health clinicians who have expressed an interest in providing services to veterans.
- ▶ The goal of the training certification program was to ensure clinicians were culturally competent on military culture, combat PTSD, and Traumatic Brain Injury. We also wanted them to be culturally competent and sensitive to the readjustment experiences of families who have been through multiple deployments, and families that lost a loved one who died in combat. We also vetted the training with the VA.
- ▶ The training was held on October 19, 2009 and over 90 clinicians were trained and certified.

Ongoing focus & current focus of Veterans Collaborative:

- ▶ Continue to coordinate efforts between Montgomery County and State and Federal partners to serve veterans.
- ▶ Continue to develop additional partnerships and collaborations to ensure efforts are coordinated.
- ▶ Continue to partner on additional training for clinicians interested in serving veterans.
- ▶ Design and implementation of panel discussion series at Montgomery College on issues of importance to veterans; i.e. PTSD, woman veterans, readjustment issues, etc. – Series is entitled, “The Cost of Freedom”. First panel discussion was taped at Montgomery College on June 24.
- ▶ Consolidating outreach efforts to hold 4 large outreach events throughout the year that would be advertised in advance. Outreach events will combine job fairs, workshops and seminars on VA benefits and other resources. These events will be geared toward both veterans and their families.
- ▶ Working with the VA on implementing tele-mental health in Montgomery County.

Submitted by:

Rich Schiffauer, Commissioner
Designee - Department of Health & Human Services

'THE COST OF FREEDOM' PANEL DISCUSSION SERIES

Goal: The goal of this project is to videotape a series of panel discussion with active duty and separated military members to educate the community on the issues and challenges they encountered while deployed and during reintegration into their community.

Purpose: The purpose of videotaping the panels session is to increase awareness and knowledge about the experiences deployed Service Members, Reserve Component/National Guard, and Veterans.

Objective: The objectives of the videotaping panel sessions focused on returning Service Members and Veterans include:

1. Educating the public regarding the problems and challenges faced.
2. Increasing awareness of the needs and services.
3. Promoting communication about issues encountered.
4. Highlighting the strengths and negative outcomes.

Description of the Project: Montgomery College in Maryland will videotape panel participants discussing a variety of topics focused on deployment and reintegration issues. Panel participants will include active duty military, Service Members from the Reserve/National Guard Components, Veterans, and Family Members. Individual videotaping sessions will focus on the topics listed below:

- Readjustment/Reintegration issues of OEF/OIF veterans & Families
 - Experiences, Supports, Resources (helpful vs. unhelpful), & Relationships/Familial interactions
 - June 24 4-5:30pm Macklin Towers Montgomery College
 - Panelists already determined
- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Traumatic Brain Injury, & Depression
 - Consequences of Issues: Suicide and Substance Abuse
 - To include clinician with combat experience & veteran in treatment
 - Resource materials to be developed
 - How friends/family can be alerted, learn to deal
- Benefits & Strengths
 - Education, Employment, Medical
 - Vet Centers, VA services
 - Benefits of Services, Application Process
- Female Veterans (Readjustment, Experiences)
 - Not yet determined
- Veteran's Day Panel (week of/before November 11)
 - To include all eras, combat and non-combat
 - Share their story of 'What being a Veteran means to me'
 - Not done in studio but in classroom with audience

The videotaped discussions will be aired on Montgomery College television and on Montgomery Community Cable. Copies of the taped series will be provided to Montgomery County Public Libraries and Montgomery County Public Schools.

Collaborative Sponsorship & Membership

Collaborative members work in various organizations throughout the DC Metro Area and meet bi-monthly by phone to determine next step procedures. There is no funding for this project and all efforts are completed with donated time and pro bono services. Each member brings their own unique expertise to the collaborative dynamic. Members are generally invited through other participants as the conversation develops and additional proficiency as needed.

Submitted by: Rich Schiffauer

HOW TO CONTACT YOUR COUNTY ELECTED OFFICIALS



**County Executive
Isiah Leggett**

The **County Executive** can be reached at:

Executive Office Building
101 Monroe Street, 2nd Floor
Rockville, MD 20850
240-777-2500 (V)
240-777-2544 (TTY)

ocemail@montgomerycountymd.gov



Montgomery County Council

The **County Council** can be reached at:

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240-777-7914 (TTY)
240-777-7888 (FAX)

county.council@montgomerycountymd.gov

Standing, left to right: Mike Knapp, Nancy Navarro, George Leventhal, Vice President Valerie Ervin, and Marc Elrich
Seated, left to right: President Nancy Floreen, Roger Berliner, Phil Andrews, and Duchy Trachtenberg

**Isiah Leggett, County Executive
Uma S. Ahluwalia, Director
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**Language translation and alternative formats of this report are available upon request.
For additional information on the Commission, please call the telephone numbers or write to the
address listed above or e-mail via the contact information listed below.**

*Montgomery County does not discriminate on the basis of disability in
employment or in the admission or access to its programs or services.*

2009 - 2010 Annual Report Prepared By:

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